MORTAL KOMBAT II

EXCLUSIVE 16-PAGE REVIEW GUIDE!

MEAN MACHINES SEGA

1-2 PLAYERS

24 MEG

GAME TYPE
BEAT EM UP

PRICE TBA

BY ACCLAIM

RELEASE SEPTEMBER

OPTIONS
CONTROL: JOY PAD
CONTINUES: 3
SKILL LEVELS: 6
RESPONSIVENESS: EXELLENT
GAME DIFFICULTY: AVERAGE

1ST DAY SCORE
BEAT FIFTH FIGHTER

ORIGIN
The follow-up to Acclaim's highly successful Mortal Kombat conversion, featuring more moves, fighters and backdrops.

GAME BREAKDOWN

GAME AIM
Select your combatant from the twelve on offer and fight your way to a confrontation with the evil Shao Kahn.

MORTAL

▲ *Baraka's attack failed as Kung Lao realised his lace was undone.*

▲ *Excuse me, sir, you've got a fly on your chin. Here, let me get it...*

KOMBAT

▲ *The hitherto unseen 'Statues' sub-game, demonstarted here by Jax.*

The Shaolin Tournament is an annual event which, until the events of last year, had gone largely unnoticed. Fighters from all over the world travelled to the East for a chance to prove their superiority for no other purpose than the glory which winning brings. However, a new sponsor took the reigns of last year's tournament, and the course of human history was altered irrevocably.

Later stories recount how the seemingly harmless sponsor Shang Tsung was, in fact, an evil warlord from another dimension, set to eradicate Earth's most powerful fighters in order to leave the planet helpless against a proposed invasion. It transpires that Tsung and his four-armed sidekick, Goro, had been sent by the leader of the inter-dimensional 'Outworld' to unleash chaos upon the Earth. However, one of the Earth fighters, a martial arts expert called Liu Kang, killed Goro and defeated Shang Tsung in combat. Before Kang could deliver the death blow, though, Tsung disappeared through a dimension gate to his Outworld home leaving the tournament in complete disarray.

Needless to say, on hearing of Goro's death and the resultant scuppering of his plan, Kahn was furious. Begging for a chance to redeem himself, Tsung offered to organise another Tournament, bringing the greatest Earth fighters to Outworld to fight against Kahn's finest. Kahn agreed, seeing the logic behind Tsung's thinking, but decreed that Tsung too must fight to make up for his past mistakes. As such, the six greatest Earth fighters find themselves 'welcomed' by Kahn and his six unearthly entrants. As before, the rules are simple: fight to win. Winner takes all — including the loser's life...

DON'T BE SUCH A BABY

So, what's all this Babality and Friendship stuff, eh? Well, just as a series of button presses initiate a Fatality move when the second round has been won, a similar system allows the player to either reduce their opponent to a child (Babality) or give them a present of some sort (Friendship). Set routes must be taken for each, though, with the victor using only kicks in the second round in order to pull off a Babality or Friendship move.Similarly, the distance between the two sprites is essential if the move is to be pulled off.

BACK TO BASICS

If you're new to the Mortal Kombat experience — and we find that very hard to believe — here's a quick guide to the basics of fighting in the Outworld. Having selected your combatant from the twelve on offer, the players are dropped into one of the game's fighting locations with their respective energy levels shown at the top of the screen. Each bout must be completed within the 100 seconds time-limit, and the combatants are armed with a series of punches, kicks and special moves, all of which are effected via a sequence of joypad commands. On winning the second bout to clinch the battle, the winner has the option of killing his opponent using a 'Fatality' which is again effected using complex button presses. If a fighter fails to defeat the other within the allotted time, though, the one with the most energy remaining is declared the victor.

The mutant leader of Kahn's Outworld army, Baraka is a nomad of the planet's wastelands. He personally lead the troops who stormed Liu Kang's Shaolin home and forcibly dragged him to the Outworld for the return match, and rates as Kahn's most trusted ally.

BARAKA

SPECIAL MOVES

DOUBLE KICK

BLADE SWIPE

BLADE FURY

BLUE SPARK

FATALITIES

DECAPITATION

BLADE LIFT

BABALITY

FRIENDSHIP

JAX

FATALITIES

HEAD CLAP

ARM RIP

BABALITY

FRIENDSHIP

Jackson Briggs rose the to the top of the pro wrestling circuit and his strength was so impressive his reputation made it as far as the Outworld. As with most wrestlers, he sees the tournament as a chance to show off and display his posing prowess.

SPECIAL MOVES

SUPER SLAM

EARTHQUAKE PUNCH

GOTCHA GRAB

ENERGY WAVE

BACK BREAKER

SCORPION

Killed in a past tournament by Sub-Zero, Scorpion has returned from the grave intent on revenge. With him he brings a rather neat line in mid-air throws and his teleportation powers which leave a suitably spectral image in his wake.

SPECIAL MOVES

SPEAR

DECOY

SCISSORS KICK

AIR THROW

FATALITIES

FIRE BREATH

HACK'N'SLICE

BABALITY

FRIENDSHIP

LIU KANG

According to the guys at Midway's development centre, Kang was the hero of the first game who eventually repelled Tsung. Annoyed he missed his chance to kill off Tsung, he arrives on Outworld ready for a second crack of the whip.

SPECIAL MOVES

STANDING FIREBALL

CROUCHING FIREBALL

FLYING KICK

BICYCLE KICK

FATALITIES

WHEEL KICK

DRAGON

BABALITY

FRIENDSHIP

KITANA

FATALITIES

KISS OF DEATH

FAN CHOP

BABALITY

FRIENDSHIP

A once trusted member of Shao Kahn's personal guard, Kitana has been seen deep in conversation with one of the Earth fighters. As such, her entering the tournament is a double-edged sword. If she loses, she is out of the way — if she wins, it can only do Kahn good. Supposedly...

SPECIAL MOVES

FAN TOSS

FAN SWIPE

SPIN FAN LIFT

SQUARE WAVE PUNCH

SUB-ZERO

The mysterious icy assassin returns vowing once more to ensure good wins through. He fell at the last hurdle when it came to disposing of Tsung, but now wants to get his frosty mitts on Kahn and do the job properly.

SPECIAL MOVES

FREEZE

GROUND FREEZE

SLIDE

BABALITY

FRIENDSHIP

FATALITIES

SUPER FREEZE

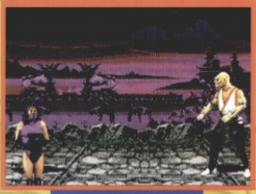
ICE BOMB

Following the rumours regarding her sister Kitana's possible treachery,Kahn has ordered Mileena to keep an eye on her sibling for any sign of an uprising. But will family loyalty win through?

MILEENA

SPECIAL MOVES

TELEPORT KICK



FATALITIES

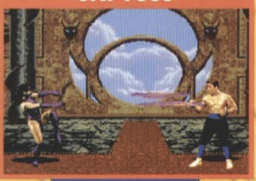
EATEN ALIVE

SAI DICE

ROLL ATTACK

BABALITY

SAI TOSS



FRIENDSHIP

RAIDEN

FATALITIES

ELECTRIC CLUTCH

POWER UPPERCUT

BABALITY

FRIENDSHIP

The god of thunder has been watching Shao Kahn's plans from his sky-based domain, and has warned the rest of the Earth fighters of Kahn's bid to throw the Universe into chaos. To be sure that good will win through he feels his participation in the tournament is essential.

SPECIAL MOVES

LIGHTNING TOSS

TORPEDO

TELEPORT

SHOCKER

REPTILE

Seen lurking in the background during the first game, Reptile has entered the big time as he joins Kahn's band of mutant good-for-nothings. His favoured fight scene is his natural forest habitat, and his recent addition to Kahn's ranks means he has a lot to prove.

FATALITIES

INVISIBLE KILL

TONGUE LASH

BABALITY

FRIENDSHIP

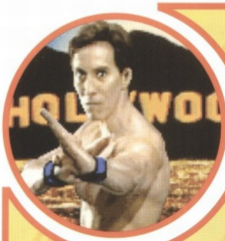
SPECIAL MOVES

ACID SPIT

ORB

SLIDE

INVISIBILITY



JOHNNY CAGE

Hollywood star extraordinaire, kick boxing king, Johnny couldn't resist the chance to show off his new moves. This time round, he's faster and boasts a new projectile throw.

SPECIAL MOVES

HIGH BALL TRAIL

SHADOW KICK

LOW BALL TRAIL

SHADOW UPPERCUT

PACKAGE CHECK

FATALITIES

BODY RIP

UPPERCUT DECAP

BABALITY

FRIENDSHIP

KUNG LAO

FATALITIES

SIAMESE CUT

HAT DECAP

BABALITY

FRIENDSHIP

A member of the White Lotus Society of fighting monks, Kung Lao has entered the tournament to avenge the death of his last remaining relative at the hands of Goro. With Liu Kang as his ally, together they plan to curtail Kahn's reign.

SPECIAL MOVES

TELEPORT

HAT TOSS

WHIRLWIND SPIN

AERIAL KICK

SHANG TSUNG

Freshly regenerated into a youthful new form, Tsung has a lot to do to make up for his mistakes in the last tournament. Thankfully, he has managed to retain his shape-shifting skills, which should make his task a little easier.

SPECIAL MOVES

MORPH INTO ANY CHARACTER

TRIPLE SKULL BOLTS

FATALITIES

BODY POSSESSION

SOUL SNATCH

KINTARA MORPH

FRIENDSHIP

BABALITY

COMMENT

STEVE

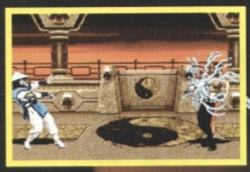
The coin-op conversion reaches its ultimate form, as Probe and Acclaim recreate every aspect of the MKII coin-op lock, stock, and barrel for the Megadrive. Forget the dull original with its minimalist gameplay, Mortal Kombat II has learned from its mistakes and the result is a game which knocks Street Fighter out of the way to secure its place at the top of the beat 'em up pile. Whether you're a fan of the coin-op or not, MKII is one of the most playable beat 'em ups available. The assorted special moves are a mixture of the simple and the tricky, but after a while they become second nature — the sign of a good fight game. Similarly, the much-hyped Fatalities, Friendships and Babalities are a nice bonus, and add a feeling of satisfaction due to the skill and timing necessary to pull them off. In terms of graphics and sound, this is as close to the coin-op as is feasibly possible. The sprites are large and well animated, and the backdrops are inch-perfect recreations. Such similarity to the coin-op has extended to the gore, too. For me, the blood was little more than a crap novelty in the original, but MKII uses it to better effect and its inclusion rounds off a perfect conversion. I could go on praising MKII until the cows came home, but I really cannot stress enough what a superb game it is. For once, you can believe the hype: MKII is bigger, better and faster than all the rest. Toasty!

THANKS TO

This book wouldn't have been possible without the help of the following people, so a big 'Hoorah' goes out to all of you: Alison F (for patience), Simon H-S (for sarcasm), Chris PD (for Jax), Fergus (for a laugh), and Barg (for being great). Cheers, muckers, you're on our Chrimbo list...

NOOB SAIBOT, JADE, AND SMOKE

Contrary to popular rumour, the arcade version of MK2 only features three hidden characters, all of which appear in this conversion — making additional cameo appearances within the Living Forest. Smoke is a grey-clad variant of the Reptile/Sub-Zero/Scorpion sprite and uses a combination of their moves, whilst Jade is a clone of the Kitana/Mileena sprite dressed in green. By far the most impressive hidden fighter, though, is Noob Saibot who is a shadowy figure and the fastest fighter in the game. And if you're wondering how he got his name, it's an amalgamation of two of Midway's top development bods.



▲ Rayden does his best Spiderman web-slinging impression.

▼ Mileena didn't think it was the right time to tell Kang about gravity.

COMMENT

GUS

Mortal Kombat II is a perfect example of how things have moved on in the last two years. Back when everyone was just getting their Megadrives, inexact conversions with dodgy graphics and sound were par for the course, and accepted as long as the spirit of the game was present. With MKII, Acclaim have indicated they are happy with nothing less than a perfect rendition. In every aspect, from graphics and game mechanics, to hidden features and (almost) sound, this recreates its arcade progenitor. In its own right it's exceptional fun. The new special moves are much more classy than those of MK and each of the endless range of finishing moves are all worth seeing (though achieving some would try the patience of a saint). The game plays at just the right pace, between tactical and frenzied, and the game presentation sets high standards. The most striking difference between this and Super SFII is that this is sufficiently different from last year's Mortal Kombat to be worth buying. The same cannot be said of Super SFII in relation to SCE. But I must add that I still regard the Streetfighter II game to be superior, with its stronger characters and repertoire of moves that really suit each one. That doesn't stop me raining down plaudits on magnificent Mortal.

TOASTY!

Every aspect of the original coin-op has been included in the conversion, including the 'Toasty!' sprite who appears in the bottom right-hand corner to praise particularly good combos. Originally, Probe thought it may have to be left out due to the Megadrive's sprite-handling limitations, and a crudely-drawn picture of the programmer (drawn by his little brother, no less!) appeared instead of the original digitised head. However, a compromise was reached by using a black and white sprite instead.

▲ The original 'Toasty' (above), and the all-new digitised replacement (below).

GRAPHICS

94

▲Virtually arcade perfect, with every move and backdrop recreated. Similarly, although the animation has been trimmed slightly, the difference is negligible.

SOUND

92

▲Crisp samples lifted from the original PCB, and a variety of different tunes and intro ditties.

PLAYABILITY

95

▲More characters means more to learn, and MK2 proves far more instinctive to play than its predecessor. A doddle to pick up, and immense fun.

LASTABILITY

93

▲The twelve fighters take some mastering, and even then it'll be ages before you master all the Fatalities, Babalities and Friendships. Satisfaction guaranteed.

VFM

93

Although the price had yet to be decided at the time of writing, this is a virtually arcade-perfect conversion and, as such, well worth considering.

OVERALL

94

A simply stunning conversion which recreates all the playability and feel of the coin-op. A classic beat 'em up which outdoes Ryu and the Street Fighter clan by far.

1-2 PLAYERS

4 MEG

GAME TYPE
BEAT EM UP

PRICE £29.99

BY ACCLAIM

RELEASE SEPTEMBER

OPTIONS
CONTROL: JOY PAD
CONTINUES:INFINITE
SKILL LEVELS:
RESPONSIVENESS: GOOD
GAME DIFFICULTY:
MEDIUM

1ST DAY SCORE
BEAT OPPONENT 3

ORIGIN
A truncated version of the most popular coin-op in the UK at the mo.

GAME BREAKDOWN

GAME AIM
Pick one of eight characters and fight your way through to Shao Kahn.

MORTAL KO II

MEGA GAME

Whilst the Game Gear version of MKII uses the same plot as its Megadrive cousin, due to memory constrictions things have been trimmed a little. To cram the coin-op into the relatively humble little handheld, Kahn has agreed that the tournament should be limited to eight entrants, with the likes of Baraka, Kung Lao and Rayden taking a well-earned break.

As such, four warriors from the side of good, and another four to fight Kahn's corner have congregated for this mini tournament, bringing with them most of their special moves. With no further ado... Fight!

▲ *Shao Kahn takes a bloody revenge.*

MEET THE TEAM

Obviously, the Game Gear was never going to produce an arcade-perfect conversion of the memory-intensive coin-op, but Probe have managed to cram at least half of the arcade game's moves into the conversion. Each fighter enters the battle with most of their special moves intact, and a Fatality at their disposal. Sadly, the Friendship and Babality moves had to go, but here's a guide to who's in and what they can do:

LIU KANG
FLYING KICK, BICYCLE KICK, FIREBALL (HIGH AND LOW)
FATALITY:DRAGON

MILEENA
TELEPORT ATTACK, SAI TOSS, ROLL ATTACK
FATALITY:EATEN ALIVE

SUB-ZERO
FREEZE (HIGH AND LOW), SLIDE
FATALITY:FROZEN UPPERCUT

REPTILE
ACID SPIT, ORB, INVISIBILITY
FATALITY:TONGUE LASH

MBAT

STEVE'S COMMENT

Unlike the Megadrive version, the original Game Gear MK deserved all the praise it received. This time, however, Probe have managed an even tighter conversion which, unbelievably, crams in most of the coin-op's fancy touches. In addition to the eight fighters, Game Gear MKII also contains the hidden fighters, a superbly-animated Kintaro and a selection of the best special moves. Similarly, even on a small screen, the Fatalities are extremely impressive — and easier to pull off, too! This is a stunning conversion, and Game Gear owners should ensure they procure a copy as soon as possible.

GUS'S COMMENT

The Game Gear version of the original Mortal Kombat was sadly overshadowed by its Megadrive counterpart, even though it was even more impressive as a programming achievement. Hopefully this incredible sequel will receive more recognition. The eight characters respond brilliantly, and their moves look as fantastic as the 16-bit version. This has to rank as one of, if not THE, coolest handheld titles of all time.

▼ *"Come here and fight!".*

KITANA
FAN TOSS, FAN LIFT, FAN SWIPE
FATALITY:EATEN ALIVE

JAX
ENERGY WAVE, GOTCHA GRAB, BACK BREAKER, EARTHQUAKE
FATALITY:ULTRA SLAM

SCORPION
SPEAR, TELEPORT, SCISSOR KICK, AIR THROW
FATALITY:FIRE BREATH

SHANG TSUNG
FIREBALL, MORPH
FATALITY:SOUL STEAL

GRAPHICS — 92

▲Large and well-animated, with loads of moves and neat touches.

SOUND — 90

▲Surprisingly good tunes, and — gasp! — recognisable digitised speech!

PLAYABILITY — 93

▲Stunningly playable. There isn't a handheld beat em up to touch it.

LASTABILITY — 92

▲Slightly easier than the Megadrive version, but the later characters get real tough.

VFM — 94

▲An average price for a superb conversion.

OVERALL — 93

An impossible conversion pulled off perfectly. The best handheld game in ages.

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